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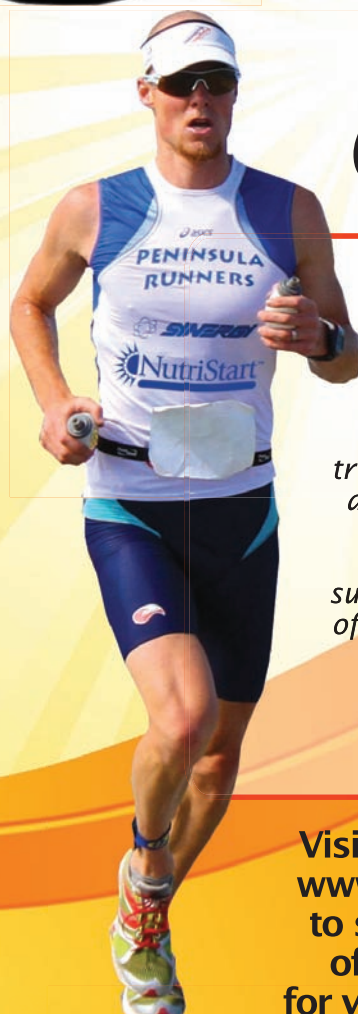
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Our cover image this month is from the film *Surviving Progress* ([www.SurvivingProgress.com](http://www.SurvivingProgress.com)) which deals in part with government policy. In Canada, we have regressive policies on climate change, F-35 jets, corporate greed, fish farms, drugs, homelessness, asbestos...the list goes on.

But we have another perspective; we can survive progress. We can invest in education, improve democracy, build community, and hold government to account. Yes, our future is at stake; dream big, and work with others. We can do it together. Yes, we can, in Canada.

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# Harper's climate change heartbreak

*Brigette DePape wrote this article while attending the United Nations Climate Change conference in Durban, South Africa in November.*

**A**s a young person from Canada, it is really hard to be at the climate negotiations in South Africa and see our government, which is supposed to represent me and the people in Canada, being the greatest barrier to progress.

On the first day of the summit, Canada announced it would abandon its commitment to Kyoto, the only legally binding treaty for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and opt instead for voluntary agreements. Instead of a guarantee for the safe and healthy planet that we need, the only guarantee from Harper's climate policy is continued, unfettered pollution.

The public condemnation of Canada by countries all over the world does not seem to faze Harper; the government's top priority is to ensure profit for the corporate elites from the relentless mining of the Alberta tar sands. The exploitation of the tar sands causes the pollution of massive quantities of water and devastates communities downstream, especially indigenous communities that face high rates of cancer and deformities

in the fish they eat.

Our government is not only eroding our environmental and social fabric, but it is also threatening our global future. Climate scientist James Hansen calls the tar sands game-over for the climate. Desmond Tutu has called on Canada and other rich countries to drastically shift its ways to defend Earth – the only home we have – and to stand on the side of what is right.

## The Canadian government chooses to... fuel climate change – working on behalf of oil and gas companies.


Instead of taking meaningful action to stop climate change, the Canadian government chooses to do the opposite – to fuel climate change – working on behalf of oil and gas companies. The government is spending \$1.4 billion subsidizing oil and gas developments; it has deregulated the tar sands, lobbied to weaken emissions reductions targets and used taxpayer's money to derail progressive climate legislation in Europe and the US. It is also using false science with studies funded by oil and gas companies to promote the Canadian tar sands.

This comes as a result of the cozy relations between government and industry, with corporations buying influence over our government while the rest of us are silenced. There are many influential corporate lobbies that influence the Canadian government, such as the military lobby, but the most powerful ones are finance, energy and natural resource corporations.

([www.canadiandimension.com/articles/1846](http://www.canadiandimension.com/articles/1846))

If our government wanted to avert renegade climate change, it would make a dramatic shift to end subsidies to oil companies, stop new oil and gas development and new pipelines and make investments in green and just jobs.

The majority of Canadians care deeply about the environment, yet Canada's government is the biggest block to progress. The Harper government is failing to represent us. As the government tries to silence dissenting voices, we must persevere; we must be louder.

While I am deeply heartbroken by what the Harper government is doing inside these negotiations, I am inspired by the other young people and frontline communities across Canada working on the outside. People from all over the world are building the global movement for climate justice, working not for polluters, but for the people and our planet. 

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# Surviving Progress

We've thrived  
but can we  
survive?

One of the main criticisms levelled at the Occupy movement has been that it is unclear what it is about. Critics have pointed to a plethora of issues – corporate greed, government debt, indigenous rights, unemployment, homelessness, ecological destruction, GMOs, climate change, and more – that seemed to be jostling for peoples' attention. Of course, many or all of these issues are interconnected, although it seems we are still struggling to find the wherewithal to express just how.

*Surviving Progress*, a new documentary by Mathieu Roy and Harold Crooks, launching at the Rio Theatre December 2-8, does a pretty good job of just that. The film was actually made before the Occupy movement exploded onto the scene in North America. But it echoes many of the same ideas and concerns raised by Occupiers, in a series of thought-provoking interviews with leading thinkers placed within the context of the big picture of human evolution, from the primitive ape of the Ice Age to the intellectual ape of the Technology Age.

One of the key interviewees and inspiration for the film is Ronald Wright, author of *A Short History of Progress* (2005), upon which the film is based. Wright suggests that, while progress generally brings improvement, sometimes it can lead to what he calls a "progress trap." For example, when primitive man became too successful at hunting mammoths, his food supply became extinct.

This ecological theme tracks right through *Surviving Progress*. "Earth is finite", we cannot overspend its "natural capital," we are reminded by the likes of Mar-



garet Atwood, David Suzuki, Jane Goodall, and some slick CGI sequences and flyovers depicting disappearing natural landscapes.

Yet there is a rapidly growing population around the world wanting access to the "bonanza" of resources and material wealth, as is conveyed in a tense visit to a saw mill at the edge of a Brazilian rainforest and a road trip with a convoy of Chinese *nouveau riche* drivers.

As Michael Hudson, former balance-of-payments economist for the Chase Manhattan Bank explains, our financial system is designed for the short-term gain of a self-governing financial class, at the expense of whole nations that are burdened with debt, poverty and ecological devastation: "They're cutting down the rainforest, they're emptying out the economy, they're

"We are running 21st century software – our knowledge – on hardware that hasn't been upgraded for 50,000 years."

– Ronald Wright

turning it into a hole in a ground – to repay the bankers," he says.

Familiar territory perhaps, but the documentary is more contemplative than alarming with its soothing, minimalist soundtrack and deft editing that reinforces the idea of humanity's interconnectedness. While there's no denying the danger of impending ecological collapse due to humanity's voracious expansion, the film suggests that survival is possible by transcending the "ancestral" or "reflexive" mind of our primitive hunter selves and acting together to fix the system. "We are running 21st century software – our knowledge – on hardware that hasn't been upgraded for 50,000 years," says Wright.

Stephen Hawking's suggestion of interplanetary colonization and geneticist Craig Venter's rather frightening proposition that we "write software for life... redesigning for our own survival" offer a glimpse of poten-

tial technological solutions (funded by multi-national corporations). However, the film seems to side with Jim Thomas, author of the *The New Biomasters*, who dismisses out of hand synthetic biology as "a progress trap *par excellence*." "The microbes are going to end up laughing at them," he says.

Ultimately, as Vaclav Smil, population scientist and author of *Global Catastrophes and Trends*, puts it in an irrepressible monologue, the main solution, the one that people don't want to talk about, is not a new one: "We have to use less." *Surviving Progress* is the kind of good-looking and palatable package that may help sink that elementary idea a bit deeper into our ape brains. ■

Robert Alstead writes at [www.2020Vancouver.com](http://www.2020Vancouver.com)





# Harvard's stand for nature

In early November, 70 Harvard University students walked out of their introductory economics class. They wrote professor Gregory Mankiw, saying the biased nature of his course “perpetuates problematic and inefficient systems of economic inequality in our society.” Mankiw is the author of *Principles of Economics*, a textbook used by almost every economics student in the Western world.

The walk-out was part of a larger event organized by Boston's Occupy protest and it echoed a key element of the worldwide Occupy movement. Like these students and protesters, I've been thinking about our dysfunctional economic paradigm. I share the anxiety that we are sacrificing too much to a system driven by three fallacies: that well-being can only be measured in money, that distribution does not matter and that the economy can grow forever.

This economic system is relatively new. In the 1930s and '40s, world leaders had to address unemployment and underproduction. Many of our current economic measures were developed when natural capital was plentiful, but built capital was not.

With growing human populations and profit-driven, consumer-based economics, more land is being eaten up by development, habitat is being destroyed and degraded and resources are being exploited at unsustainable levels. Natural capital is disappearing.


For example, salmon were abundant on BC's West Coast in 1900. More built capital, such as nets and boats, was required to harvest them for food. By 2000, there were no shortages of nets and boats, but the fish and the habitat they need to survive had become scarce.

Economists are starting to recognize human well-being depends on more than having manufactured products. A great deal of research shows things like leisure time, equality and healthy relationships are more important to people's happiness than greater consumption. This is starting to change our economic models. But we still have far to go.

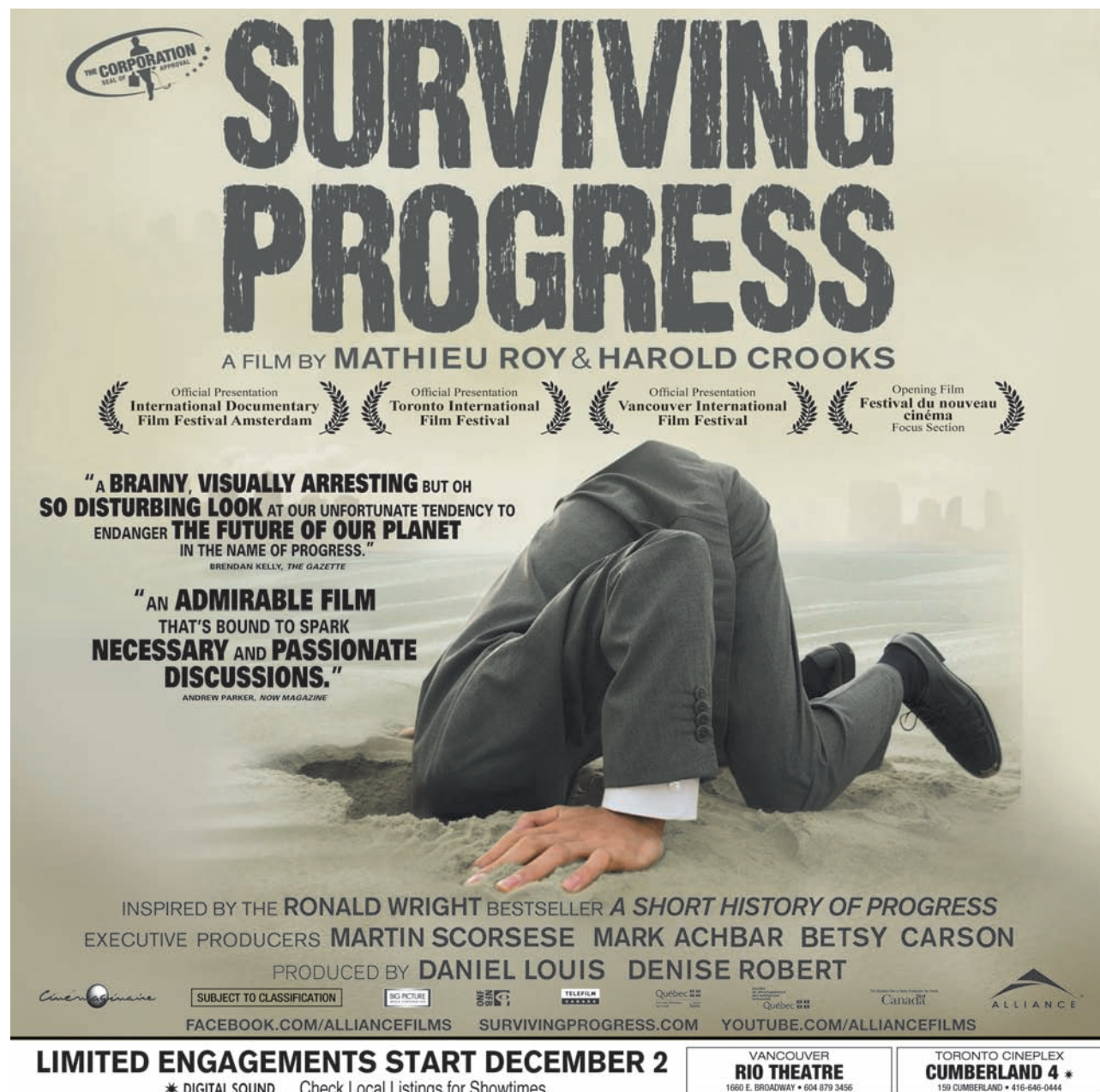
How do we address this? One tool is natural capital valuation. Putting a price on nature's services is a complicated subject. Although nature's full worth is unquantifiable, its ecosystems undeniably provide services to society that have real and tangible economic weight. For example, wetlands filter water and reduce natural disasters, and forests manage water runoff and provide habitat for pollinators.

By making nature's value visible, decision makers can take into account the true benefits and costs of conservation and restoration. These economic

benefits have even received the attention of the World Bank, which plans to assist countries in tracking natural capital assets and including them in development plans, in the same way we track other wealth using the GDP index.

These measures won't completely change our current economic paradigms, but they could at least slow the rampant environmental devastation and consequent impacts on human health and well-being that are a symptom of our profit-driven corporate economies. They may also help us to think about what we truly need to be healthy and happy as humans and to see the trade-offs inherent in our activities. Until we do this, we cannot hope to address the inequalities the students and the Occupy protesters are rallying against. 

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation environmental economist and policy analyst **Michelle Molnar**. Learn more at [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)



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# Eye exams & cheat-sheets

As someone who sees himself as acutely sensitive to potentially unnecessary medical treatment, it was only when I sat in front of a health professional that I realized a startling and embarrassing truth: it is extremely tough to practise what you preach.

I recognize I might not be an ordinary patient. For the book I'm writing on medical screening tests, I have interviewed experts, pored over guidelines created by dependable and authoritative bodies such as the United States Preventative Services Task Force and spoken to many patients.

This research has led me to an irrefutable conclusion: most people are naked in the medical screening marketplace. A dilemma, yes, but it also makes the *raison d'être* of my book clear. Consumers need to do their research and be armed with some vital questions when facing an offer of medical screening. Ignorance and screening tests can be a deadly combination so you must face such tests with your eyes wide open.

Speaking of eyes, I was recently at an optometry clinic having a routine eye exam. It was the standard optometrist stuff, with various rows of letters flashed up on the wall and me trying to prove to the optometrist that my eyesight hadn't deteriorated since my last visit. So far so good.

But then he pulled out a tool, about as big as a telephone handset. It set my Spidey senses alight; was I about to walk the gangplank of a screening test? Trevor, the optometrist, was reassuring. He was going to use a tool I later learned is called a non-contact tonometer to shoot a puff of air into my eyes. Our conversation went something like this:

"What's that for? Are you doing a screening test on me?"

"Yes, it's a screening test. It makes a little puff of air against your cornea and measures the pressure of the fluid cycling inside the eye."

"So why do you need to know the pressure inside my eyeballs?"

"It's just a little test to see whether the fluid in your eyeball pressure is normal or not. High pressure can lead to glaucoma, which can lead to blindness."

"Whoa... Are you telling me you're gonna test my eyes with something that might tell me I've got a chance of being blind in the future? What if my eye pressure is high?"

"Then we'd talk about what it could potentially mean and we'd do a few other diagnostic tests. Other things could cause raised pressure in your eye so we'd do more tests to rule out those things. We'd also check out the visual field. If glaucoma damage was happening, you're going to find it symptomatically in the visual field."

"So this is just the first slice, right, this screening test?"

"Yeah. By the way, why are you asking so many questions?"

I told him about my research and the subject of the book. I told him I know of many people hurt by simple 'screening' tests. People need to ask the right questions and I ashamedly admitted it's hard to think of the right questions when you're on the spot like this.

"It's a pretty simple test, just a puff of air into each eyeball," he said reassuringly.

I was definitely stalling for time, scratching my brain for more questions and eventually doing what most people do when offered a medical screening test. I gave in. He shot a puff of air in each eyeball. "Your pressure is normal," he said and then carried on with the rest of my eye exam. Whew! 'Normal.' I like being normal. But what if I wasn't?

What a piercing moment of self-realization. I was thinking about all the stories I'd heard of people getting PSA tests or mammograms, with absolutely no inkling of what they were getting into. Those tests are also simple, but when abnormal test results come back, patients are often flung headfirst into life-altering dilemmas.

But Alan, chill. It was just a puff of air to the eyes. Yet the feeling I was doing things back-assward remained. How stupid is that? Agree to the test then do your own research? Wrong, wrong, wrong.

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After the eye exam, I started researching tonometry and found, not surprisingly, it wasn't a slam-dunk. One study said finding and treating ocular hypertension reduces the risk of developing glaucoma compared with a control group. Others said there wasn't much evidence to support it as a screening tool. Like most screening tests, a strong whiff of uncertainty hung in the air.

My conclusion was absolute: I need a cheat-sheet for the next time someone offers me a screening test, something that cuts to the basics. So here are six simple questions anyone facing a screening test should be asking. (The answers provided here are specific to the eyeball pressure test.)

1. Is this screening test recommended by a quality, independent body such as the United States Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF)?

While the USPSTF said the tonometry tests can find increased intraocular pressure (IOP), it also said the jury is still out on the evidence. Earlier detection of high eyeball pressure is not definitive in reducing the possibility you will have vision related problems in the future.

2. Can anything be done if the test does find high eyeball pressure? (Or whichever condition the test is designed to find.)

Yes, they can do other diagnostic tests to see if there is damage to the optic nerve and they can prescribe drugs, usually eye drops. This does not imply all patients with borderline or elevated eye pressure should receive medication. Higher than normal eyeball pressure is only a "risk factor" for glaucoma and many people with higher

pressures never develop glaucoma. In fact, 25 to 50 percent of people with glaucoma have normal eye pressure.

3. How prevalent is the disease in question in people like me? In this case, how likely is it that someone my age is heading for glaucoma?

According to the World Glaucoma Association, glaucoma is the second most common cause of blindness

### Ignorance and screening tests can be a deadly combination so you must face such tests with your eyes wide open.

worldwide but only about seven percent of all patients with glaucoma are younger than 55 years. The biggest risk factor is being old.

4. Is the test accurate?

There is uncertainty over the accuracy of tonometry because intraocular pressure changes throughout the day and the test can't account for differences in thickness and curvature of the cornea. Operator error can always come into play. One study said the method of non-contact tonometry has a sensitivity of 22.1 percent and specificity of 78.6 percent. Sensitivity is the percentage of screened people who have the condition and are correctly identified as such. Specificity refers to the percentage of screened people who don't have the condition and the test tells them they don't have it.

5. Who is pushing the test and why?

Groups like the Glaucoma Foundation and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind recommend routine eye pressure checks. Drug companies that make eye drops and tonometer manufacturers would obviously like to promote this screening as much as possible. Tonometer makers promote things like World Glaucoma Day by offering free screening events and such events showcase their products. The drug maker Pfizer funds a campaign called All Eyes on Glaucoma, which recommends regular tonometry screening. Pfizer sells latanoprost or Xalatan, eye drops designed to reduce eyeball pressure.

6. If I have a positive test, what does the downstream medical treatment look like?

Not everyone who has higher than normal eyeball pressure needs eye drops. The drops can be expensive and the rules for when you should take them can be confusing. Side effects of the drugs include changes in eye colour, stinging, blurred vision, eye redness, itching and burning.

Facing an upcoming screening test? Write down these six questions on a piece of paper and stick them in your wallet. These eye exams seem simple, but not every medical screening test is as simple as a puff to the eye. It's a good reminder you need to go into screening with your eyes wide open. [▶](#)

**Alan Cassels** is a drug policy researcher at the University of Victoria and the author of the forthcoming book **Seeking Sickness**, which focuses on the world of medical screening.



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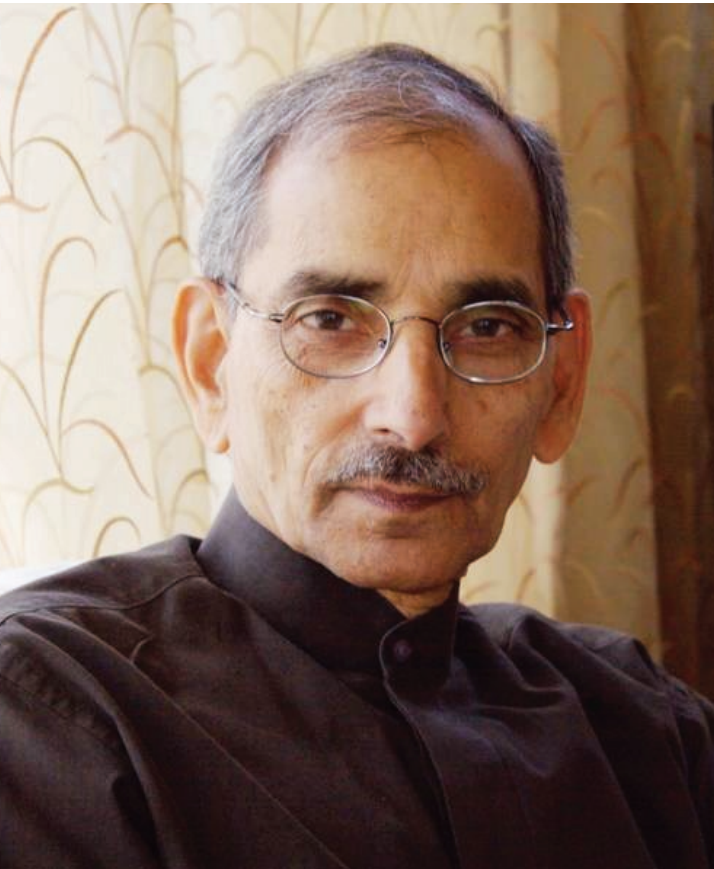
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# Health Canada whistleblower loses job over revealing health risks




Chopra, Haydon and Lambert exemplify why whistleblowers should be lauded and protected. By risking their careers to keep Canadian food safe, they've led the way in protecting the public [from bovine growth hormone].

The scientists say that, during this time, they experienced pressure from the highest levels of bureaucracy and that this was at the behest of large corporations. Over six years, Chopra, Haydon and Lambert were reprimanded, muzzled and eventually dismissed in 2004 for insubordination.

"By dismissing us from our jobs, the government is trying to scare other public service

employees so nobody else will speak out about any illegal things being done in the workplace," says Haydon. "Since our dismissal, they have legislated new rules under the Public Service Accountability Act, administered by the Public Sector Integrity Commission, which provide no protection to whistleblowers. More than 10 years ago, we were sent to the then-new Public Service Integrity Office, which dismissed our complaint without conducting a duly proper investigation. Ten years later, we are still waiting for a proper investigation ordered by the Federal Court."

In August 2011, the scientists' complaints were considered at the Public Service Labour Relations Board. In a 208-page report, the Board ruled against seven of the eight grievances filed by the scientists. In one case, they agreed that Lambert was wrongly dismissed, but Chopra and Haydon remain fighting for their jobs. Chopra, Haydon and Lambert exemplify why whistleblowers should be lauded and protected. By risking their careers to keep Canadian food safe, they've led the way in protecting the public good. 

**Lyndsie Bourgon** is a freelance writer in Toronto (lyndsiebourgon.com). This article originally appeared in a publication by Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (cjfe.org). Reprinted with permission in Common Ground.

## Dr. Chopra wins Integrity Award

Dr. Shiv Chopra – along with Dr. Margaret Haydon and Dr. Gérard Lambert – is a recipient of the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE's) 2011 Integrity Award. This new award highlights the need to protect those who speak out in the public interest and reflects the commitment shown by these Canadian scientists when they informed the Canadian public about specific health dangers inherent in food production in the face of great pressure to remain silent.

"This award highlights a critical element in the struggle for free expression," says Arnold Amber, CJFE president. "It recognizes that those who speak out against wrongdoing in the public or private sectors do so at tremendous risk, both personally and professionally." The three scientists being presented with the inaugural Integrity Award are regarded as heroes around the world, particularly for raising concerns regarding Monsanto's bovine growth hormone (rBGH), a drug designed to boost the milk production of dairy cattle.

These revelations triggered international headlines and resulted in rBGH being banned in Canada and most other developed countries, but also led to the three scientists being reprimanded, ordered to be silent and eventually dismissed from Health Canada. CJFE confers its Integrity Award on Canadians who act in the public interest, without thought of personal gain when they speak out about dangerous, unethical or illegal practices they learned of or experienced in the course of doing their jobs. The award highlights the right of all Canadians to take action in the public interest and their right to freedom of expression in doing so.

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE) champions the free expression rights of journalists and media workers around the world. In Canada, it monitors, defends and promotes free expression and access to information. It encourages and supports individuals and groups to be vigilant in the protection of their own and others' free expression rights. They are active participants and builders of the global free expression community. ([www.cjfe.org](http://www.cjfe.org))

**D**r. Shiv Chopra is tireless. Speaking from his home in Ottawa, Chopra describes how he and his Health Canada colleagues were consistently harassed, reprimanded and eventually dismissed for whistleblowing on issues involving public health and food safety between 1988 and 2004.

"It's not just our right, it's our obligation to blow the whistle," he says. "This is a matter of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and these freedoms are on behalf of the public, for the public." In 1998, Chopra, Dr. Margaret Haydon and Dr. Gérard Lambert, scientists working for Health Canada, testified before the Senate, raising concerns about the controversial bovine growth hormone (rBGH) developed and manufactured (at that time) by multinational food corporation Monsanto. The drug was designed to promote milk production in dairy cattle, and testimony from the scientists led to a ban of the drug in Canada. And they didn't stop there. Later, the group warned against carboxid, a drug that promotes growth in pigs. In 2003, before mad cow disease grabbed headlines, Chopra and Haydon called for a total ban on including animal parts in the feed of other animals. In 2001, Haydon publicly argued that a ban on beef from Brazil was focused more on politics than public health.



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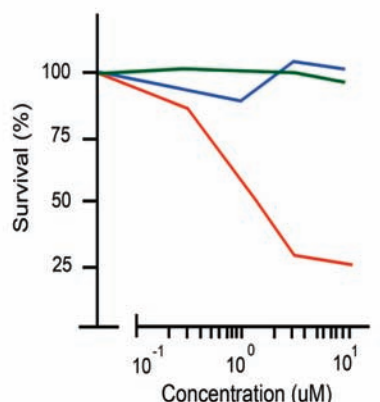
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# What's on your plate?

GM foods were introduced in 1996. Today, seven out of 10 processed foods in our grocery carts contain GM ingredients.

**B**iotech corporations are in cahoots with government to feed the world with genetically modified food. Canada's regulatory system requires new biotechnology products to undergo science-based safety assessments. However, in the case of Monsanto's MON 88017, glyphosate-tolerant corn, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) reviewed studies undertaken by Monsanto and deemed them to be "a full, comprehensive and rigorous safety assessment" on which to permit "unconfined release into the environment and livestock feed use."

GM foods were introduced in 1996. Today, seven out of 10 processed foods in our grocery carts contain GM ingredients as a result of this lax regulatory position. Experiments have been conducted on our food supply without our consent or knowledge. To date, there have been no studies assessing the long-term effects of GM foods on either human or environmental health. Claims that GM foods increase yield and are needed to feed the world's increasing population have been decried in the Union of Concerned Scientist's 2009 report *Failure to Yield*.

GM plants have mostly been modified to withstand applications of the herbicide Roundup™ and to produce their own Bt insecticide in every cell, including pollen. We eat Bt toxin with every bite of Bt corn or processed food containing Bt corn. From 1996 to 2008, US farmers increased their use of herbicide by 383 million pounds, with 46 percent of the total increase occurring in 2007 and 2008. Overuse of Roundup™ results in "superweeds," which are resistant to the herbicide, which causes farmers to use more Roundup™ every year. The widespread use of glyphosate is causing negative impacts on soil and plants, as well as on animal and human health.

Glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup™, is a strong immobilizer (chelator) of essential plant nutrients, as well as a powerful biocide that harms beneficial soil organisms. Consequently, glyphosate has deleterious effects on the nutritional quality of the crop produced and increases disease susceptibility. And GMOs cross-pollinate and their seeds can travel. It is impossible to fully clean up our contaminated gene pool.

Health problems have increased severely since GMOs were introduced 15-years-ago. The percentage of Americans with three or more chronic illnesses jumped from seven percent to 13 percent in nine years; food allergies have skyrocketed and disorders such as autism, reproductive disorders and digestive problems are on the rise. The American Academy of Environmental Medicine tells us not to wait before we start protecting ourselves, especially our children who are most at risk.

Public education campaigns have succeeded in confining almost 80 percent of GMO planting to just three countries: the United States, Brazil and Argentina. In more than two dozen countries, including China and in the European Union, GMO labelling is mandatory.

Take a stand and join communities around the world to declare your community a 'GE-Free Zone' and while this is in process demand your grocery store puts 'GMO-free' stickers on processed food. Get to know what you are being dished up today by using the true food shoppers guide. See <http://truefoodnow.org/shoppers-guide/>

Carolyn Herriot is author of **The Zero Mile Diet: A Year-round Guide to Growing Organic Food** and **A Year on the Garden Path: A 52-Week Organic Gardening Guide** (Harbour Publishing). <http://earthfuture.com/gardenpath/>

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# Holiday offerings

**I**n some families or groups of friends, getting together to cook is one of the best parts of a celebration. Enjoy this stuffed, baked squash and gravy with the people you love.

## Holiday winter stuffed squash – makes about 8 servings

1 winter squash such as Hubbard, butternut or acorn, about 5 lbs  
1 recipe for Quinoa stuffing

Pre heat the oven to 350 degrees F. Pierce the top of the squash with a sharp knife at a 45-degree angle 2 inches over from the top. Pushing the knife blade away from your body, cut around the top of the squash and remove the cone-shaped top piece. Remove any fibrous material from the cone and set the top aside. Remove the seeds and pulp from the cavity of the squash with a spoon. Put the top back on the squash, put on a baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool for 15 minutes.

Spoon the stuffing into the squash cavity. Set lid in place, return squash to baking sheet and bake for 45 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick can be easily inserted into the side of the squash. Leftover stuffing can be placed in a loaf pan, sprinkled with 2-3 tablespoons of water, covered and heated in the oven for the last 20 minutes of the cooking time for the squash. Remove the squash from the oven and place on a warm serving platter. Slice into wedges and serve.


## Rosemary gravy – makes 3 1/2 cups

1/4 cup coconut oil or olive oil	2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
1/4 cup each of diced onion, carrot, and celery	2 tsp dried rosemary
2 cloves garlic, chopped	1 tsp dried thyme
1/2 cup all purpose or whole wheat flour	1/2 tsp dried sage
3 cups vegetable stock	1/4 tsp pepper
2-3 tbsp tamari or soy sauce	Salt to taste

Heat oil in a medium sauce pan over medium heat; add onion, garlic, carrots and celery and cook for 5 minutes or until onion is tender. Stir flour into the vegetable mixture to absorb the oil and cook for 3 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent flour from burning. Add stock gradually until it is smoothly mixed in, bring to boil, decrease the heat to low. Add tamari, parsley, rosemary, thyme, sage, salt and pepper and simmer for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally. If gravy is too thick, add more stock; if too thin, simmer uncovered to let some moisture evaporate. Season to taste; serve.

## Quinoa stuffing – makes 5 cups

1-1/2 cups water	1 cup corn kernels
1 cup quinoa	1/2 cup diced sweet red pepper
1/2 tsp salt	1/2 cup sunflower seeds
1 tbsp coconut or olive oil	1 tbsp lime juice
1/2 onion, diced	1-1/2 tsp each of basil and dill
2 cloves garlic, minced	1/2 tsp thyme
2 stalks celery, diced	1/8 tsp pepper

Bring water to a boil over high heat in a small pan. Stir in quinoa and salt, reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 20 minutes or until the liquid is absorbed. Put into a large bowl and allow to cool. Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat and cook onions for 3-5 minutes or until tender. Add garlic and celery and cook for 3 minutes then add to the quinoa along with the corn, red pepper, sunflower seeds, parsley, lemon juice, tarragon and pepper. 

Recipes are from the new **Cooking Vegetarian** by chef Joseph Forest and Vesanto Melina (Wiley Canada). [www.josephforest.com](http://www.josephforest.com) and [www.nutrispeak.com](http://www.nutrispeak.com).

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# Beyond the camps

## Occupation and the Co-op connection



Day of Action , November 17, 2011 Occupy Wall Street, New York.

As the co-op movement in Canada gears up for celebration of the UN International Year of Co-operatives in 2012, a very different movement has burst upon the scene, taking shape and occupying plazas, parks and other urban spaces in over 2,000 cities around the world. The Occupy movement, sparked with little more than a hope and a prayer in the streets of New York, flared into a global phenomenon and gave voice to a profound sense of rage and resentment at an economic system that betrays the vast majority by enriching an ever shrinking and entitled elite. For the first time in generations, the grievances of the 99% were being voiced in terms of class and inequality and people heard what was said and knew it was true. The wonder is that it has taken so long.

Across Canada and the US, the tent camps sprouted like mushrooms. And at sites like Occupy Vancouver, the camps took on a life of their own as the media shifted

and fend off the media attacks that focused obsessively on camp conditions, drug use and an increasing collection of homeless. Following the decamping, a space has opened up allowing the movement to reflect on its experience and to plot a strategy that will serve its purposes for the long term.

But the question is what *are* its purposes? Aside from the most generalized of slogans, no one could yet say what *particular demands* the movement has. And this has been one of the main criticisms of Occupy from friends and foes alike. Which seemed just fine with many of the Occupiers. The vagueness and diffuseness of their demands seemed in keeping with a sense that specificity or a platform would narrow what was essentially a moral cause to a set of issues that could then be attacked or discredited. Those fears are, of course, well founded, as evidenced by a recently leaked document outlining a fully developed PR campaign for the Bank-

ers Association of America to discredit the movement. But this will happen regardless.

Another cause for the absence of focus is that a platform entailed a level of organization and cohesion not yet possible in such a grassroots and localized movement. The speed and spontaneity of the action didn't allow the time necessary to develop and hone an organizing message. Nonetheless, one proposal to emerge was support for the campaign to get people to transfer their money from banks to credit unions.

Occupy is at a crossroads. With the demise of the camps, the movement has entered a stage that calls for a shift from the tactics of *opposition* to those of *proposition*. Those who support Occupy need to know which alternatives the movement is proposing. If not the status quo, then what? How do we realize a system that is fundamentally different? What kind of organization will allow Occupy to mobilize the power and the ideas it needs to move it forward? These are the questions that have to be grappled with.

And this is where the co-op movement comes in.

At first sight, the bank transfer campaign seemed to provide a welcome bridge between two very different political and cultural realities. On the one hand we have an Occupy movement that is young, anarchic, angry, energized, individualistic, inclusive, irreverent and deeply suspicious of leadership. The co-op movement seems like the polar opposite. It is mostly middle-aged, highly structured, very white, cautious and polite to the point of painfulness. Across such a cultural divide, what could these two movements have to offer each other? The answer, as made plain by the bank transfer campaign, is plenty.

The Occupy movement has to propose answers to the mess we are in. Not to do so merely raises the suspicion that, in fact, it *has* no solutions. And on this crucial point, the co-op movement is invaluable. It has the keys to a real alternative. Despite its more staid and cautious character, the co-op movement represents an economic and social model that actually embodies the values that the Occupy movement cares so deeply about. The proposal to shift money from banks to credit unions was a stroke of genius. It gave people something concrete they could do. It raised public awareness by focusing attention on a financial model that was democratic and accountable and a real alternative to the banks. Unlike the tent occupations, it was an action that everyone could be part of. Best of all, the tactic had the potential to really worry the banks.

But that's just a start. The Occupy movement could point to the ways in which economic democracy is not only more just than capitalism, but also more viable. Co-operatives routinely outperform capitalist firms. Occupy could show that the survival rate of co-ops is double that of conventional businesses. It could highlight how credit unions, by responding to the actual needs of their members, didn't engage in the fraudu-

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lent financial speculations that bankrupted the economy. Credit unions came through the financial crisis even stronger than before and had no need of massive public bailouts. Co-ops reduce inequality.

On a global level, the movement could point to how fair trade, based on the return of profits to small producers through their co-ops, represents an entirely different logic for international trade that isn't based on the extraction of profit by exploiting the weak. And at a time of global economic recession, the experience of the recovered factory co-ops of Argentina, Uruguay and elsewhere shows how workers and the communities in which they live can take back control of shuttered factories and provide a living for workers and their families. And there is much, much more. With an effective research and communications strategy, Occupy Vancouver could be issuing media releases on these issues every day.

For its part, Occupy has shown the degree to which people are fed up and very pissed off. The language of Occupy captures the moral outrage that lies at the heart of the movement. It is an outrage that the co-op movement needs to recognize and to respond to, in its own right. Not to do so is to signal that the co-op movement is no longer relevant, or even worse, indifferent to the issues raised so powerfully by Occupy. To Occupy's energy, the co-op movement can contribute solidarity and a framework for



For its part, Occupy has shown the degree to which people are fed up and very pissed off. The language of Occupy captures the moral outrage that lies at the heart of the movement.

change. The two movements are like the two parts of a single equation. Both movements share a commitment to a world in which money doesn't rule. Both aim to humanize our economy by making economics serve the well being of society and not the other way round.

What is needed here is an understanding that we don't need to start from square one. That others before us have been where the protesters of the Occupy movement are today. The struggle against corporate greed and social injustice is not new. What is new is that we have the experience of 170 years of co-operation to see that the tenets of democracy can be applied to economics just as in politics and that they work. It is this heritage of economic democracy that is invaluable to the movement that so ardently seeks an alternative to the status quo.

The Occupy movement and the Co-op movement need to start a dialogue. There must be a conversation about how the present capitalist system can be challenged and ultimately transformed, by democratizing our economies. The Occupy movement needs to grapple with what the alternative to the present system might *continued p.35...*

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## Just now

an interview with Eckhart Tolle

To read Eckhart Tolle's latest column, please see the current print edition of *Common Ground*. For copyright reasons, we are authorized to publish this column in our print version only.

**JR:** In your new book, I feel like you're the modern equivalent of the explorers that came to the new world, but an explorer and documenter of consciousness, discovering a new world.

**ET:** Yes, discovering is the right word. It's not that you need to make a great effort to attain it or bring it about or acquire it. It's discovering it's already there in you – conscious awareness that's obscured, or partially obscured, in many people. It's a discovery of something already there.

It's like waking up after a dream, because identification with the thinking mind and its stories and the old emotional conditioning is like being immersed in a kind of dream world, which very often turns into a nightmare – acting out old conditioned patterns again and again. The whole structure of the egoic mind is an old dysfunction.

There's some evidence that the ego started about 6,000 years ago, but nobody can say for sure. Before that, humans were in a state of innocence. When we go beyond the dysfunction of the ego, we regain our original innocence, but on a much deeper level. This is why Jesus said unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, returning to the original innocence, and at the same time going much deeper into that with full awareness – that's the process. We're coming out of thousands of years of dreadful suffering, almost the whole of recorded history of humanity. If you really look at it in an unbiased way, as if you'd never seen it before, one cannot but admit that, to a large extent, 80 to 90 percent of it is a history of pathological insanity, the suffering that humans have created for themselves and, of course, inflicting it upon others.

**JR:** And exporting it through colonization to the new world.

**ET:** Yes, so the important part of the awakening process is the realization of the insanity in human history, collectively, to this day playing itself out in world events. Also, to be aware of the insanity within oneself – old, dysfunctional patterns that come again and again that create suffering. So when you see that you're insane, then you're not completely insane. Sanity comes the moment you realize the fact of insanity. To see insanity is not a negative thing.

**JR:** At least you're out of denial.

**ET:** Yes, that's why in the film *A Beautiful Mind*, for example, which is about a mathematical genius who did have a mental dysfunction, his mind was developed in certain areas but he was also insane. The viewer of the film doesn't know that until a certain point when the character realizes that many of his experiences are delusions. At that moment, his healing begins. He's not cured yet, but his healing begins because he's recognized his own insanity. That recognition can only come out of sanity, which is the awareness of unconditioned consciousness.

**JR:** I remember you saying before you published your last book that the next one would be about why there isn't peace on this planet. Was finding a solution one of the major intentions of *A New Earth*?

**ET:** Yes, to see the nature of the major dysfunction. That's why I talk quite a bit about the ego in this book. We need to recognize the nature of the dysfunction. Sometimes, even very great Eastern teachers sometimes neglect that part because they're not really touched by the magnitude of, especially, the Western ego. So it's very important for us to see the dysfunction so that we can recognize it when it arises.

Part of the new book is about recognizing the ego, which I regard as a semi-autonomous energy. It's an energy field. Every thought you think is an energy field. It has a form and then it dissolves and then there is another form. The ego itself is an energy field and it has a collective and individual aspect. Every indi-

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vidual ego is part of the collective. They're connected. Every individual is a manifestation of the collective. To recognize that is essential because the ego, being a very clever entity, has many ways of reappearing. Even if you've seen it in one disguise, it can suddenly reappear in a new one.

You might suddenly realize your whole sense of self, identity, is being derived from your possessions and social position. You see that your whole sense of identity is bound up with that and you recognize one aspect of ego. Well, usually it only comes to people when they suffer, when the identification with something no longer works...



Eckhart Tolle with *Common Ground* publisher Joseph Roberts.

It's recognizing the ego in its many disguises. I've met Buddhist monks who had enormous egos without knowing it. I remember being in a monastery afraid to approach them because they seemed so aloof. Yet I've met other Buddhist monks who were like little children and it was a joy to talk to them because they'd laugh and not take themselves seriously at all. They didn't take the whole Buddhist thing seriously either, yet they practised it knowing it was only a form and they weren't identified with it.

There's a dimension in us that has nothing to do with content. Self-realization is that I am not that. I'm not my story, not my grievances and hang-ups, not the story of me that I'm telling other people at parties or repeating in my head again and again. That is only form. It's temporary.

When you see what you're not, it's already liberating. Something inside you breathes a sigh of relief. Then, of course, the mind begins to ask, "What are you if you are not that?" It wants an answer. In other words, it wants some new form. It wants a new thought. There must be a thought that I am. But it doesn't work like that. That's why the great book the Tao Te Ching starts with the line that the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao because Tao – in the ancient Chinese way of putting it – is the formless dimension. You could say pure consciousness, but with any term we use we have to be careful it's not mistaken for "It." Otherwise, the mind comes in and says, "Oh, consciousness, yes. I believe that I'm consciousness." It's not another belief. It's finding that spaciousness inside yourself that's there when you let go of identification of form. ❏

Excerpted from **Just now: a two-part interview with Eckhart Tolle** by Joseph Roberts. Read the full interview online. Go to [www.commonground.ca](http://www.commonground.ca) Click on archives. Click on 2007 at the top of the page. For part one, click on September 2007. For part two, click on October 2007.

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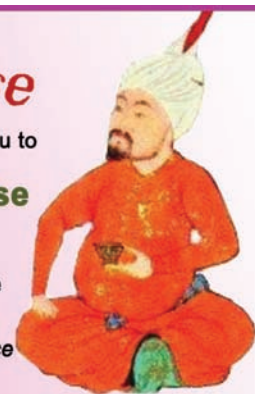
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# Buddhism online

An interview with  
Zasep Tulku Rinpoche  
by Liam Thompson



Read full interview online at  
[commonground.ca](http://commonground.ca)

**Z**asep Tulku Rinpoche was born in Tibet before the Chinese takeover and has been teaching in the West for over 25 years. He speaks six languages and is the spiritual director of 12 centres worldwide. **December 10-11:** Zasep Rinpoche gives a teaching on "Mindfulness and Healing" at the Asian Centre at UBC, 10AM-4PM, \$40/general public. **December 11: White Mahakala initiation,** 4-6PM, \$40/day. Tickets at door. Info at [www.zuruling.org](http://www.zuruling.org)

**Liam Thompson:** With our abilities in this century to have instant communication and information, how do face-to-face teachings with teachers and gurus keep their worth?

**Zasep Rinpoche:** As long as Buddhist practitioners and students understand the teachings they have received from their masters and understand that these teachings are very precious face-to-face, they keep their worth. One-on-one teachings at a personal level are very important. As long as students know that's important and don't switch the method of receiving teaching mostly into fast, high tech mediums such as the Internet and Facebook, I think technology can be very useful. ■

*Continued Online...*

# Does Enbridge ride to conquer cancer or public opinion?

Adam Sealey

**W**hat caught my attention a couple of months ago were these yellow & blue 'Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer' self-standing cardboard promo units on display in cafes, bike shops and other retailers around BC.

I asked myself what is a pipeline company doing with bicycles and cancer research? Bikes don't burn oil and pipelines carry cancer-causing products. There was no specific event date only 2012. So what gives?

Then months later came the gushing TV ads depicting happy and healthy people with bikes. Join the joyride ... what! its next June. I asked myself "why are they advertising this event eight months ahead on TV?"

My research found an independent media website [thecanadian.org](http://thecanadian.org) with the article "Oil, Cancer and Bicycles: The Unholy Alliance of the BC Cancer Foundation and Enbridge".

Here is part of what the article said:

"Unless you never open a newspaper, turn on the TV, listen to the radio, or surf the web, you have likely recently come across glossy ads for the Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer.

Here's how the event's organizers describe it on their website: 'The Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer® is a unique, two-day cycling event to take place on June 16-17, 2012. During this bold cycling journey, you will ride for two days through the scenic Pacific Northwest! Our vision is clear - A World Free From Cancer.'

Having long had the impression that oil - during its life cycle, from extraction through refining, transport, inevitable spillage and ultimate burning - can cause cancer I naturally felt it hypocritical that a cancer-fighting organization would accept money and sponsorship from a Big Oil company.

You see, the proceeds from the Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer flow to the BC Cancer Foundation, not the Society. A little more research taught me that the BC Cancer Foundation is the fundraising arm of the BC Cancer Agency, which is a BC government department - under the Provincial Health Services Authority.

So the proceeds of the Enbridge Ride to Conquer Cancer go, ultimately, to the BC government!

I then contacted Dr. Karen Bartlett of the UBC School of Environmental Health, posing to her the same question: To what extent can petroleum products be considered carcinogenic? Here's what she told me by phone: 'There are two major petroleum products that we know are associated with carcinogenicity. One is in the distillation process of petroleum products, which produces Benzene. Benzene is carcinogenic. The other is in the combustion of diesel. Diesel particulate is carcinogenic.'

What I question is whether it is ethical for an organization battling cancer to accept a large donation from a company whose products cause cancer, which they do."

The Canadian article points to collusion between governments and their corporate friends. Is Enbridge doing a PR job

to try and convince the public that they care about our health? Or, are they taking advantage of well-intended people who truly wish to conquer cancer, while getting a bunch of people feeling good about Enbridge, and by association their proposed pipeline from the Alberta Tar Sand to the West Coast.

Or was this advertising campaign meant to influence public opinion in the run up to January's Joint Review Panel Community Hearings on the Enbridge Project?

When you follow the money, timing, and connect the dots, it gets clearer.

**Damien Gillis** is a Vancouver-based documentary filmmaker focused on environment and social justice - especially relating to water, energy, and saving Canada's wild salmon. Follow his work at [www.thecanadian.org](http://www.thecanadian.org)



Here are several other dots to connect:

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<http://dogwoodinitiative.org/>  
<http://www.raincoast.org/>  
<http://savethefraser.ca/>  
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## Keeping up with time

**W**e were not designed to live by a clock. In the beginning, humans took life as it came. There was time to hunt, eat sleep and mate. The day started when the sun came up and ended when the sun went down. Before there was language, man was right-brain dominant, with more feeling and sensing than analytical thinking. There was little thought about the past or the future.

Interesting, isn't it, that, when we want to de-stress, we try to stop thinking by meditating or taking a vacation where we can be out in nature and perhaps even take off our watch. We strive to achieve a much more primitive state.

When I was growing up, there were no answering machines, no cell phones or computers and only a few television channels. All mail was snail mail. If someone called when you were out, they called back later. You didn't have to rush and check messages. A letter took about five days to reach you so things happened more slowly:

When we want to de-stress, we try to stop thinking by meditating or taking a vacation where we can be out in nature... We strive to achieve a much more primitive state.

there were no e-mails demanding an immediate response.


After school, I would play with a friend and I had no idea what the rest of my classmates were doing or saying – no Facebook to keep up with and gossip could not travel at the speed of a click. Without video games or electronic devices, we were left to play outside making up imaginary games or inside working our way through the stack of books we got at the library.

Of course, I am not opposed to technology; I'm just curious about how it has changed our relationship with time. But it is not just technology that has changed things. Even in my grandmother's day, there was no need for her to take exercise classes because she was a farm wife. Today, we take classes and have our children in multiple activities. We are always on the run whilst multi-tasking all the way.

All of this creates a constant tension and the necessity to keep one eye on the clock all the time. Even teens that may not be quite as time conscious lose precious thinking or self-reflective time, as they are constantly texting and checking their phones. They know no other way.

People sometimes ask me why I think so many people take medication for depression and/or anxiety. Certainly, for some, there are biochemical reasons. However, the pace of life has to be a contributing factor. I think we are like little lab mice running on our treadmill. Slowly, slowly, without our conscious awareness, the speed of the treadmill has been steadily increasing. We get exhausted simply trying to keep up.

How can we keep our health and our sanity? We must have regular times when we get off the treadmill. It could be a yoga class, going for a hike, or simply turning off the phone and computer and curling up with a warm cup of tea and a good book. I am not talking about once in a while, but incorporating this "slow time" into your regular routine.

No time you say? John Wanamaker said, "People who cannot find time for recreation are obliged sooner or later to find time for illness." Ironically, it is often only after one has been touched by serious illness that it becomes important to make self-care a priority. When we detach from the clock, suddenly we have all the time in the world. 

**Gwen Randall-Young** is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, CDs and the new Creating Healthy Relationships series, visit [www.gwen.ca](http://www.gwen.ca) See display ad this issue.

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Lili Haydn, Occupy Washington, DC at Freedom Plaza singing an anti-war song in front of the Declaration of Independence.

**A**t the time of this writing, Occupy Vancouver's tent camp is no more. Across North America, the remaining occupations are under siege from law enforcement and negative press, to say nothing of harsh weather. Is the global flareup from October 15 just a historical flash in the pan, and its tagline, "We Are the 99 Percent" destined to become a forgettable political cliché? Or is there something necessary and new animating the "Occupy Everywhere" movement that will take on new forms in the future?

On a chilly early November day, one of the Occupy Vancouver organizers described how he joined the movement. "I used to be one of the one percent and made a lot of money," said Suresh Fernando. "I was stockbroker at Scotia Macleod, lived at Wall Center, drove a beamer, all that kind of fancy stuff. I was never happy." He says he went through a "spiritual transformation" over the past few years, a change that took him to the grounds of the Vancouver Art Gallery on October 15, the day of global solidarity with Occupy Wall Street. Fernando has been on and off the site ever since.

"You know, the financial industry is predicated on the stupidity of the general public, so I'm here as someone who deeply understands the other side of the fence," he says with animation. A common theme among occupiers is that financial institutions and other big organizations have grown outside the reach of representative democracy. The voting citizen has become an isolated atom of consumption, squeezed for profit and bled by debt.

The corporate state is comparable to a cruise ship with a disintegrating hull. The crew is trying half-heartedly to plug the leaks, while the officers are pulling boards from steerage to redecorate the ballroom. Off in the distance, we can see the lights of

# From breakdown to breakthrough

## The legacy of "Occupy Everywhere"

small vessels picking up people thrown from the ship. I will argue below that the occupations have performed, in part, like rescue vessels – jury-rigged rafts bound together with determination and awareness.

Leopold Kohr wouldn't have been surprised by the outcry against the big, lawless institutions of today. Born in Salzburg Austria in 1909, Kohr was something of the Rodney Dangerfield of economists – a guy who "couldn't get no respect." He died in 1994, but his central thesis lives on, summed up in his 1957 book *The Breakdown of Nations*, in which he wrote, "Wherever something is wrong, something is too big."

Anticipating E. F. Schumacher's sixties manifesto, *Small is Beautiful* and anthropologist Joseph Tainter's scholarly work on cultural collapse in the late eighties, Kohr held that endless growth is unsustainable in all complex systems, from organisms to organizations. As any institution grows, the distance increases between those at the base of the pyramid and those at the top. As democratic participation weakens, power gravitates to a shrinking minority who use it to enrich themselves at the expense of the many.

The "1 percent" is no more of a historical quirk than the Gilded Age of late nineteenth century America. To Kohr, elite-level corruption is a repeating motif that heralds the breakdown of great powers in their cancerous, terminal stages. The phenomenon predates the Ancient Romans, whose anti-Republican elite distracted restless citizens with gladiatorial spectacles, while pouring huge resources into defending an overextended empire that was being hollowed out from within.

Kohr wrote his historical survey of failed giant states in 1951, in the glow of post-war recovery. It found a publisher six years later, just prior to the starry optimism of the space age. His thesis on the crisis of size was seriously out of step with the times. Wasn't it the sheer scale of US military might that saved Europe from Hitler? And weren't supranational bodies like the UN ushering in an era of global harmony? Weren't the Sputnik and Mercury programs only possible through the massive expenditures of the two remaining superpowers, the US and the USSR?

Surveying the historical record, Kohr refused to believe the post-war rebuilding boom could be extended indefinitely into the future. Endless growth is not the answer, he argued. It is the very essence of the problem.

It's not ideology that is at the heart of history's train wreck of failed states, Kohr insisted. Great civilizations with widely varying belief systems and political structure – from the Maya to the Spanish Empire to the USSR to Nazi Germany – have all engaged in mass exterminations of their own subjects before ending in ruins. The only characteristic these empires shared was their overwhelming size, which precluded any significant involvement of citizens in affairs of state. "While every kind of small state, whether republic or monarchy, is thus by nature democratic, every kind of large state is by nature undemocratic," Kohr wrote.



Our politicians and pundits genuflect before economic “growth” as a good in and of itself. Yet many of the most pressing global problems – increasing wealth disparities, big bank Ponzi schemes, Third World debt, wars for profit, petrodollar-backed resource depletion, nuclear power disasters, monoculture GMO crops, ecological destruction, the fall of personal privacy and the rise of public surveillance – trace back to bloated institutions that are artificially propped up by the mesh of monopoly capitalism. These organizations are dominated by a small class of technocrats, plutocrats and political leaders who live in a bubble of privilege and career-adaptive blindness. In this global network of interlocked corporate directorships and multinational cross-ownership, democratic oversight is possible only in theory, but rarely in practice.

As journalist Bill Moyers observed in a recent speech, people “are occupying Wall Street because Wall Street has occupied the country.” Wall Street has also occupied the world. The investment banks spread their toxic, securitized assets from Newark to Norway, in a cynical plan to maximize profits by watering down the risk among unknowing players, initiating a global economic crisis in the process. In 2002, the globe-girdling investment bank Goldman Sachs colluded



“I used to be one of the one percent and made a lot of money,” said Suresh Fernando. “I was stockbroker at Scotia Macleod, lived at Wall Center, drove a beamer, all that kind of fancy stuff. I was never happy.”

in a secret deal with Greek government that concealed the nation’s swollen budget deficit for years, leading to crisis in the Eurozone when the real numbers were revealed. Sachs’ manipulation of the commodity futures market has also led to spikes in the cost of staples across the world, resulting in mass hunger and food riots in the developing nations, from Peru to Zimbabwe.

The worldwide trade derivatives market is now estimated at 791 trillion dollars, 20 times greater than the GDP of the entire planet. The problem of overgrowth is not limited to the financial sector’s fictions, of course. The US maintains 860 military bases across the world to ensure the security of the petrodollar. Presiding over this is a swollen, unmanageable defense department, a sinkhole into which literally trillions of dollars have disappeared, unaccounted for by Congressional oversight.

Gargantuan corporations like Walmart and Google now dwarf entire nations in economic scale. Kohr warned that when a civilization “grows cracks in its later stages, it was not because of its social shortcomings but because of its infection with large-scale organisms such as monopolies or unsurveyably huge market areas which, far from being responsible for economic progress, seem to be its principal obstacle.”

Anticipating George H. Bush’s talk of a “New World Order,” the Austrian professor predicted a global network of interna-

tional control, but was not optimistic of its outcome. “After a period of dazzling vitality, it will spend itself. There will be no war to bring about its end. It will not explode. Like the ageing colossi of the stellar universe, it will gradually collapse internally, leaving as its principal contribution to posterity its fragments, the little states, until the consolidation process of big-power development starts all over again,” he wrote in *The Breakdown of Nations*.”

On October 15, millions of people hit the streets, from Santiago to San Francisco, in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street. The horizontally organized, leaderless occupations are informed by the kind of networked, open-source collaboration that is found on the Internet. Within weeks of the global protests, street people were wandering into the camps to take advantage of the ground security, free food and supplies. Organizers discovered they weren’t just protesting big banks; they were trying to figure out how to sustain themselves and others for an indefinite period. The homeless were free to join in the committees and general assemblies, giving everyone a chance to get to know, and possibly grow, with others in their midst.

Writing on Salon.com, Glenn Greenwald observes that the Occupy movement “is not devoted to voicing grievances as much as it is finding a model to solve them.” Writer Marina Sitrin, who is researching global mass movements from Spain to Egypt, insists the Occupy movement’s assemblies offer a “radical, if not revolutionary, way of organizing. When we’re in our neighbourhoods and come together and relate in that way, it’s more like alternative governance,” she told Russian Television. In the last few weeks, the protests seemed to be as much about social transformation as protest against big banks. As one anonymous commentator on the Internet asked, “Why demand change [of Wall Street] when people can, collectively, make it obsolete?”

Here’s the big question. Is it possible the occupations were the rough drafts of a parallel civic society, decentralized but global? If, as Kohr insisted, the overgrowth of states and institutions invariably leads to a collapse, is the Occupy movement offering us a rough sketch of more humane, people-scaled way of life, in spite of all its unavoidable flaws and *faux pas*?

“We have accomplished so much,” enthused a woman at Occupy Vancouver, identifying herself as Kiki. “We need to prove to the world that we can take care of each other. That we don’t need the government breathing down our neck... so what we’ve basically done is build an alternative community here that provides all the same social services to people that they should be getting in Vancouver but they actually aren’t getting... we want to show people it works, and we’re actually accomplishing it.”

It’s a big claim that is easy to make in the first, flushed weeks of a newly minted movement. But this kind of enthusiasm is not without intellectual foundation. At Solari.com, Catherine Austin Fitts points out the multiplier effect of providing goods and services to the community by the community. Fitts, formerly assistant Secretary of Housing in the first Bush administration, insists that “lending circles” and other ground-up, microeconomic operations result in the circulation of wealth abundance, in the inverse of the Walmart wealth extraction model for communities.

Fitts believes the present debt-fuelled political economy is far too big to be defeated outright; it can only be “starved.” This can be accomplished by finding alternative, smaller-scale models for living, and reengineering money to serve public assets over private hoarding. *continued p.33...*



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## StarWise December 2011

THE WINTER SOLSTICE takes place on December 21 at 9:30 PM. We have arrived at a most important juncture in which we have massive and major decisions to make and we don't have a great amount of time to figure it all out. The question is not if Israel and Iran will clash, but when it will happen. The tension is as taut as ever and having studied the charts of Benjamin Netanyahu, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Barack Obama, I am convinced we are on the brink of disaster in the middle east.

At the time of the solstice, Saturn is conjunct with Netanyahu's Sun and the combination indicates a most serious turn of events in which severe karmic energies are dealt with. Mars moves through Virgo and becomes retrograde on January 24, 2012, indicating Mars will be moving very slow and is known to display much more volatility, violence, aggression and unrest as a result. Mars becomes stationary right on Ahmadinejad's Jupiter and this combination is also an indicator of aggression and war. Obama's Mars happens to be in the same place as Ahmadinejad's Jupiter and



### ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19

It's time to reach for the gold ring on the merry-go-round of life. Lord Mars visits Virgo for several months, offering up the opportunity to organize and harmonize your life. Diet, work and worship need an overhaul. Seek your truth.



### TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21

"Make hay while the sun shines" is a fairly apt mantra for 2012. Material acquisition and manoeuvring for power, name or fame is not what I'm hinting at. You have an opportunity for real growth. A deep and profound change takes place.



### GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20

December will be memorable and hopefully for the right reasons. There will be plenty of opportunities to make mistakes (yours and others), as everything seems to be in contrast and diverse forms of controversy. The lunar eclipse on December 10 will tell the tale.



### CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22

The Sun's passage through your opposite sign Capricorn starting on December 21 brings up a time for rest and recreation. Jupiter and Mars cast good energy your way for several months and progress along with success is attainable. Deal with health issues now.



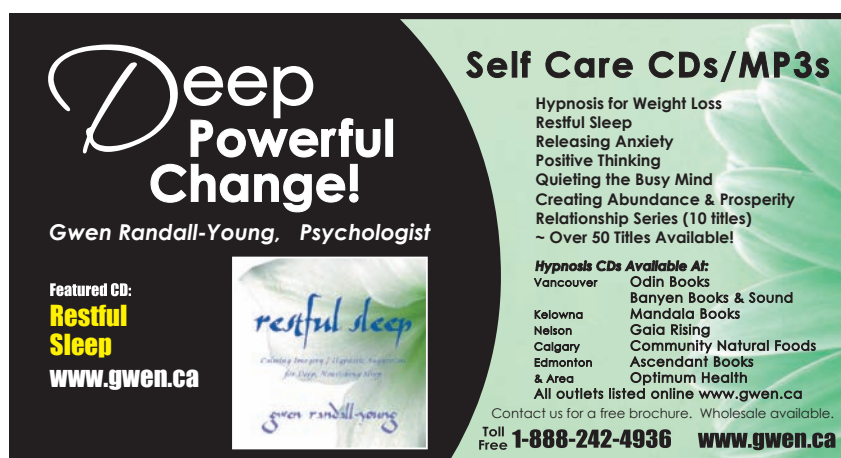
### LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22

Family, especially children, features strongly throughout December. Your social circle broadens as unique friendships blossom. Career sector gets a huge boost from Jupiter until mid-June as the wheel finally starts to roll freely. Romance is in the cards as well.



### VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22

Fiery Mars pays a visit for the next seven months, which is great in many ways as it instils courage, stealth and bravery. Venus and Jupiter cast fine rays throughout December bringing happiness and abundance. Jupiter's positive influence runs until next June. Walk, don't run.



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draws him into the play. The solar eclipse on May 20, 2012 activates very sensitive points in Netanyahu and Ahmadinejad's horoscopes. It brings up a time in which the karmic seeds bear fruit. Two wrongs do not make a right.

We're concerned with the equal distribution of wealth, but monetary wealth will be the least of our worries if we get this wrong. The sabre rattling may turn deadly with grave consequences for the world in its wake. The world fears Iran will attempt to destroy Israel or that Israel will strike first. There are no winners in this situation, only losers. What can we do; what must we do? Yet our fear may be displaced. It is not about who is building nuclear weapons or even who possesses them now. Our fear should be that they exist at all. The whole concept is insidious and we should all hang our heads in shame as long as these WMDs are on our planet.

If we must protest, why not protest about saving all of the precious people on the planet? We are all deserving of love and safety. This is a huge wakeup call and we must truly and unequivocally address it now. Speak up to your leaders and insist this whole cycle of paranoia and warmongering be laid to rest before it is too late. Where are the visionaries? We need you now. <



**LIBRA** Sep 23 - Oct 22

Libra people possess a very active, curious and dynamic mind that needs constant stimulation and information. The December skies offer up all kinds of excellent opportunities in which you can feed your voracious intellectual appetite. A revolution is taking place in your consciousness.



**SCORPIO** Oct 23 - Nov 21

Jupiter casts his special glance your way until June 2012. Doors are open and opportunities await thee. Although you can groove on the good times, it may be wise to capitalize on this special Jupiter blessing by striving for the highest ground attainable.



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22 - Dec 21

A solar and lunar eclipse takes place in Sagittarius, along with retrograde Mercury. It tells of a dynamic and intense time, in which potentially all hell breaks loose. On the positive side, December brings important revelations that propel you into the future.



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22 - Jan 19

December starts off with Venus conjunct Pluto in Capricorn. A new love, a new way of life along with the demise of the past takes place. It is a time of birthing and dying, laughing and crying, worshipping and growing in a most dynamic way.



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20 - Feb 19

Venus enters Aquarius on December 20, bringing a festive vibe to the season. The moon and Venus are conjunct on December 26, indicating you will be in fine form doing all the things Aquarians do with family, friends and strangers alike.



**PISCES** Feb 20 - Mar 20

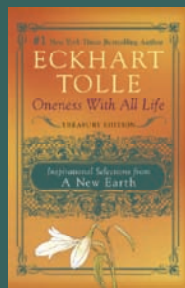
Home, family, relationship and career sectors are strongly activated. Diplomacy, patience and kindness are the best tools to keep at the ready as the month develops. There will be plenty of opportunities to use them. Truth, valour, courage and bravery figure in the mix.

**Mac McLaughlin** has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email [mac@macsstars.com](mailto:mac@macsstars.com) or call 604-731-1109

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# No such thing as “overweight”

**H**ave you ever stepped off the bathroom scales and said, “Wow, how did I *gain* that much?” or “I didn’t think I had *lost* that much weight.” Chances are you may have experienced both situations, but did you ever wonder what kind of weight it was? When you gain or lose weight, it will be one or more of three body weights: bone, muscle or fat. Known as our body composition, these weights can and do change during our lives when we are: 1) sedentary; we can gain fat and lose muscle. 2) exercising; we can lose fat and gain muscle or bone. 3) dieting; it can cause muscle loss and fat gain. 4) taking bisphosphonates; (drugs for “osteoporosis”). Intake over four years can cause bone loss.

The problem with all these situations is they cannot be measured or detected by the scales, BMI (Body Mass Index) or height /weight charts. These charts are based only on your total weight, not the bone, muscle or fat that can change inside your body and which can only be measured accurately by a DEXA X-ray body composition scanner.

Bone is given a density score called a T-score. Muscle is measured as part of your Lean G score, and fat is measured as a percentage of your overall weight. The

new goal of weight control is for you to be in the recommended ranges for each category. If you achieve these goals, you have what is now called a “healthy weight.” For example, here are the scan results of a female, with a healthy weight, who came to see me in 2007.

T-Score; 1.6  
Lean G; 32,000 g.  
Fat; 33%

One year earlier, she was diagnosed as being “overweight” by her MD who was using the BMI charts. She felt hesitant about the diagnosis and was shocked when the doctor recommended the weight loss drug, orlistat, a fat blocker that offers minimal results with nasty side effects. My client was relieved about the new way to diagnose weight conditions and felt fine with her body image. Since that initial scan, she has gone on to lose 10 pounds of fat and gain four pounds of muscle while maintaining her bone density. These results keep her in a good range and are based on science, not on recommendations by the medical, pharmaceutical or weight loss business.

This is important because the only weight you may want or need to lose is fat weight, *not* muscle or bone, which is healthy vital tissue, no matter how much you have in your body. Be aware of any program or products that promote weight loss. You must know what kind of

weight you need to gain or lose. I have seen people lose muscle and bone while gaining fat on many of these types of programs. Because everyone is unique, you will benefit from a program based on your personal needs and goals.

Armed with this knowledge, you begin to realize there is no such thing as overweight, underweight or

Know what kind of weight you need to gain or lose. I have seen people lose muscle and bone while gaining fat on many of these types of programs.

ideal weight. Terms such as weight loss, losing weight and gaining weight lose their meaning and are replaced with a new awareness about your body and how you can take care of it. You can take control of your weight with knowledge, assertiveness and a good plan of action. ◀

**Allan Lawry** is a lifestyle and fitness coach in Vancouver. For more info on the Healthy Weight Program, contact 604-220-7188, info@alfitness.ca

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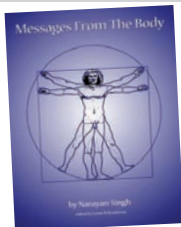


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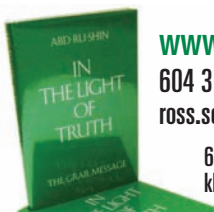
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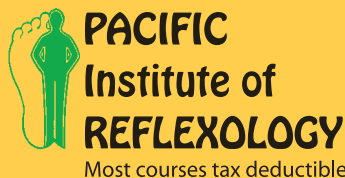
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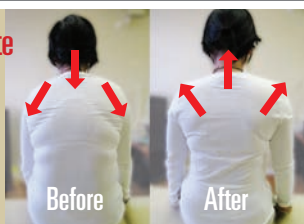
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~ H.H. Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

*Whatever God's dream about man may be, it seems certain it cannot come true unless man cooperates.*  
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...Olson from pg. 23

I don't want to romanticize the Occupy movement and its members – or its embers, smoldering after judicial writs and police crackdowns. There is nothing romantic about camping out in near-zero temperatures or figuring out the next move with authorities while dealing with group dynamics and contending egos. For the movement's foot soldiers, juggling the day-to-day problems of ground security and sanitation has been part of their tour of duty, as they offer up a vision of a parallel civil society that looks more wonky than wonkish. Their unexpected fusion of pragmatism and idealism is still completely beyond news outlets, which cannot see the forest for the tents.

Speaking of tents, we'd do well to remember there have been tent cities in major cities across the US at least since the crash of 2008 that have nothing to do with the Occupy movement. They are inhabited, in part, by scared and scarred former members of the middle class, many who have lost their homes and livelihoods to a subprime mortgage or a hospital bill. We may get the kind of occupations we deserve, depending on our willingness to confront the reality of a transnational situation that stretches from New York's Zuccotti Park to Cairo's Tahrir Square.

Big is looking unstable these days. Big multinationals fixate on maximizing quarterly profits, with the social and ecological costs of resource extraction ignored as "externalities." Big finance continues to measure economic progress by false metrics like the GDP, which counts a heart attack or oil spill as an economic plus. Big media swoons over a volatile stock market while amusing news-consumers to death with celebrity piffle. Big gov-

ernment signs off on wars for profit and private security/surveillance programs, while carving up the public sector for business interests. Perhaps its time to stop genuflecting before big and remind ourselves of the virtues of the small. That can start by supporting local networks of



photo by Geoff Olson

interdependence, whichever form they take, from workers' cooperatives to farmers markets to credit unions to inventive new forms of public assembly.


On a cold weekday night in November, I stood on a street corner surveying a landscape of tents and tarps at Occupy Vancouver. "How are you doing in this cold?" I asked a grizzled fellow in a chair on the perimeter of the Vancouver Art Gallery grounds. "Just

fine," he replied with a smile. "The warmth of the beautiful people here is all I need."

Occupy London recently staged an occupation of an abandoned UBS bank in Hackney, turning a storefront reminder of the global economic crisis into a "Bank of Ideas," which they intend to use for teach-ins and other social events. For his part, Suresh Fernando believes the Occupy movement will continue to evolve. "I look at this as setting up a community and mutual support and infrastructure... and transporting it somewhere else and setting up a parallel process." The Occupy movement doesn't have to be a fixed point in time and space, he insists.

Fernando hopes the larger public will learn to appreciate the Occupy movement as a social template rather than a slacktivist temper tantrum. The Occupy meme has been beta-tested in cities across the world, and although the movement is being hammered by violent police crackdowns in Oakland, Berkeley, New York, Denver and elsewhere, you can't arrest an idea.

"The importance is about human beings using technology to reconnect in the real world to discuss building a better one," says Fernando. "It's in the physicality of this, being actually able to shake hands and being here, that's what's different. And that's important from a human relationship standpoint."

Somewhere, the spirit of forgotten Leopold Kohr is nodding in agreement. To reverse his dictum about size, whenever something is right, something is human-scale. 

www.geoffolson.com



# Letters

## Great news for the Flathead River Valley

The mining and energy development ban that you helped us work towards has finally become law. Last week, the Lieutenant Governor of BC gave royal assent to legislation that prohibits mining and energy development in the Flathead. The ban follows a petition to the World Heritage Committee from 11 conservation groups, including Sierra Club BC. Learn more at <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?SierraClubBC/4131e9569e/5b362423ae/df90159a84>

This long-promised legislation inks what was previously in pencil. It prevents destructive projects like mountaintop removal coal mining from ever occurring in the Flathead. We celebrate this new law, the important first step in our three-step plan to permanently protect the Flathead.

Next up: we need a National Park in the south-eastern one-third of the Flathead, to fill in the missing piece of the adjacent Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park and a Wildlife Management Area in the rest of the Flathead Valley and adjoining habitat.

Thank you again for your part in this success story. We couldn't have done it without your help.

(See Global TV for more information: <http://cts.vresp.com/c/?SierraClubBC/4131e9569e/5b362423ae/5cd6e15f8e/v=2qUtDSzZcfA&feature=youtu.be>)

*Sarah Cox, Flathead campaign manager,  
Sierra Club BC*

## BC's bio-boondoggle – stripping forests for fuel

BC's forests, already devastated in the interior by the Mountain Pine Beetle, have another assault coming: harvesting purely for energy generation.

BC Hydro's latest "Call for Bioenergy" will grant new forest tenures for the specific purpose of biomass energy. The BC Bioenergy Strategy ([www.energyplan.gov.bc.ca/bioenergy](http://www.energyplan.gov.bc.ca/bioenergy)) says it "aims at turning BC's abundant biomass reserves into low-carbon energy opportunities."

This is a policy shift that intends to liquidate forests. At the heart of the policy shift is the wrongheaded equation of biomass with carbon-neutral. The science is clear the burning of forests is anything but carbon neutral and can be just as bad as fossil fuels when all factors are accounted for. The Bioenergy strategy calls for massive forest and habitat destruction for short-term energy, which flies in the face of sustainable forest management.

The call for a re-think of biomass energy has swept across the continent in recent weeks as major environmental groups like Greenpeace have called for a removal of the carbon neutral myth as a basis for energy policy.

Meanwhile, all this newly-cut forest, which has sequestered millions of tonnes of carbon over the past decades, will be burned, releasing its carbon into the atmosphere instantly. This runs directly counter to government goals for "clean energy" and the goal of

reducing BC's greenhouse gas emissions.

(See *Turning BC Forests into Fuel*, Millwatch, September 2011 <http://www.millwatch.ca/component/content/article/18-news/125-turning-forests-into-fuel> and *BC's Bioenergy Boondoggle*, Watershed Sentinel, September-October 2011 <http://www.watershedsentinel.ca/content/bcs-bio-energy-strategy-bio-fuel-pine-beetle-pellets>)

*Delores Broten, senior policy advisor, Reach for Unbleached Foundation*



## Speak out against smart meters

Hot on the heels of awareness generated through the Occupy movement, the next major issue on BC's plate is the banning of BC Hydro's "smart meters." I call upon all BC residents to get aware of this critical issue, which affects all of us, and then resound a unified "No" to smart meters and put committed action behind the words.

Many of us know about the absurd costs and privacy issues associated with this program. But even more important is to become aware of the real, serious health risks that smart meters pose. Already in BC and elsewhere, there have been thousands of cases of illness, insomnia, headaches and other forms of malaise as a result of smart meters being installed in the vicinity of humans. (And multiple reports of plant life dying around installations as well – are rosebushes subject to the placebo effect?) In many cases, the people had no idea the meters were installed; it was only after they traced back the installation date and correlated it to when their health crisis started that the cause of illness

became evident: smart meter radiation.

BC Hydro is flat-out lying about the level of microwave emissions that each smart meter – and each "collector" – emits. If you do a YouTube search for "smart meters radiation," you will see actual footage taken by those with the proper equipment to read the radiation. Independent scientists have calculated one smart meter causes more than 100 times whole-body radiation than a cell phone. And they have been measured to be constantly bursting every few seconds, also contrary to BC Hydro's propaganda.

Testing equipment visually demonstrates radiation of more than 200,000 microwatts/m<sup>2</sup> -- /per smart meter/. (A rooftop cell-phone tower showed 30,000 microwatts/m<sup>2</sup>.) In many cases, there are plans for not just one, but literally walls of 20-30 or more of these things packed together in residential buildings, each one categorized as a radio station, with the bedrooms of our mothers, kids and friends a few feet away on the other side of the wall. And the intense, bursting characteristic of the emissions has been biologically shown to be even more damaging. It is no wonder some people have already been forced to flee their homes.

It also needs to be common knowledge that the mayors and councillors of BC collectively voted in September to issue a moratorium against the installation of smart meters. The public and our elected municipal leaders clearly do not want smart meters and we've voiced this strongly and clearly. That same day, BC Energy minister Rich Coleman went on record saying he does not care about the will of the mayors, councillors or British Columbians.

Democracy has clearly left this building. It is time for us to wake up and demand something different.

Let us also remember former premier Gordon Campbell, a registered Bilderberger, specifically exempted BC Hydro's smart meters from requiring any public review or input. And we are left to pay with our health. None of this is acceptable. It is high time British Columbians stand up en masse and say "No" to this corporatocracy nonsense. If you are reading this message, speak up; the people of your province need you.

Getting educated on smart meters:

[www.citizensforsafetechnology.com](http://www.citizensforsafetechnology.com) – *Citizens For Safe Technology (BC)*

[www.stopsmartmetersbc.ca](http://www.stopsmartmetersbc.ca) – *Coalition to Stop Smart Meters (BC)*

[www.stopsmartmeters.ca](http://www.stopsmartmeters.ca) – *Initiative Petition to Stop Smart Meters in British Columbia*

[www.emrabc.ca](http://www.emrabc.ca) – *EMR Health Alliance of BC*

[www.SmartMetersTruthMovie.com](http://www.SmartMetersTruthMovie.com) – *Smart meter public awareness documentary (BC)*

*Josh del Sol, Vancouver*

*Josh del Sol is a wellness consultant, social activist and producer of a new Smart Meter public awareness video, available for viewing at [www.SmartMetersTruthMovie.com](http://www.SmartMetersTruthMovie.com)*

# Health Canada's fraudulent licensing scheme

If Health Canada has its way, the only place you will be able to buy your vitamins and supplements is in drug stores. The agency that claims "to ensure that Canadians have ready access to natural health products that are safe... while respecting freedom of choice" is covertly accomplishing a very different objective. It is busy removing 40,000 entirely safe dietary supplements from the market and it is doing so by unlawful means.

Health Canada's destruction of the health food industry relies on the propagation of two falsehoods: (1) that dietary supplements are potentially unsafe, and (2) that Health Canada has the legal right to regulate health products. Health Canada first creates a false fear and then imposes itself as the remedy for that imagined fear.

Dietary supplements are among the safest substances on the planet, safer than foods. In the entire 50+year history of the health food industry, there have been zero fatalities and zero cases of permanent harm caused by consuming any of its products. In comparison, several people die each year from food poisoning or from anaphylactic shock from eating peanuts.

Under the guise of protecting the public, Health Canada has implemented an allegedly "compulsory" licensing scheme. It is attempting to restrict from the market any dietary supplement it has not blessed with an NPN licence. Problem is that only 20,000 product licences have been granted out of the 60,000 products that were on the market when the licensing scheme began. Health

Canada is refusing to license entirely safe products for reasons that defy both logic and science. Many licences have not been granted simply because Health Canada has not bothered to examine the applications.

What Health Canada does *not* want you to know is the NPN licensing scheme is unlawful. There is no Act of Parliament (or statute law) that gives Health Canada the



## There is no Act of Parliament (or statute law) that gives Health Canada the legal authority to regulate health products.

legal authority to regulate health products. The Constitution Act (1867) gives the federal government jurisdiction over crime, but not over health, which is the exclusive domain of the provinces. Further, the Natural Health Product Regulations have never been sanctioned by Parliament, nor have they ever been reviewed by the Scrutiny of Regulations Committee (SREG).

Health Canada restricts true health claims for safe dietary supplements. It doesn't matter what textbooks or research may say and it doesn't matter how many third

party testimonials you can provide; if Health Canada doesn't like the claim, you can't make it. This is an act of censorship, in violation of the "freedom of thought, belief and expression" guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Health Canada takes the following unreasonable (and unlawful) positions: (a) that it bestows upon suppliers the privilege of staying in business, (b) that any product it has not examined must be presumed unfit for sale, and (c) that any claim it does not approve must be presumed to be fraudulent.

Whether Health Canada is acting out of ignorance or malice does not really matter. The resulting devastation is the same. Ironical that Health Canada is committing fraud in the name of preventing fraud.

The Dietary Supplement Protective Union is gathering together suppliers who have had it with Health Canada's unlawful regulations and are not going to comply any more ([www.dspu.ca](http://www.dspu.ca)). You can aid this "peaceful noncompliance" movement simply by encouraging your local health food store to continue to stock your favourite products, whether or not these products have been assigned NPN numbers. Natural Health Freedom Canada also has a number of initiatives to restore health freedom. ([www.naturalhealthfreedomcanada.com](http://www.naturalhealthfreedomcanada.com))

**David Rowland** is Canada's first registered nutritional consultant, an author and an innovator in the field of nutrition. [www.rowlandpub.com](http://www.rowlandpub.com)

...Camps from pg. 17

actually look like, be able to point to examples and be lucid in articulating a new economic model that embodies its values. And at this point in its life, Occupy needs a strategy and a structure on a scale to match its ambition. It needs leadership. In this, it can learn not only from the experience of democratic decision making in the co-op movement, but also from the experience of other movements that learned how to develop leadership and articulate demands without compromising their values. The Civil Rights movement that has served as such an inspiration for Occupy is a good example. And if the Tea Party "movement" can launch a mass march on Washington to protect the privileges of America's 1%, could the Occupy movement do the same for the 99%?

For its part, the co-op movement has some soul searching to do. It should look carefully at what the Occupy movement has accomplished in so short a time and why. It should understand that the discontent with our present economic system is deep and wide and that the protesters have unearthed a reservoir of public feeling that is profound. And it should ask itself why, with all its resources and experience, it is not in the vanguard of such a movement.

On November 17, I was in Manhattan to witness the

Day of Action called to celebrate two months of occupation in New York and to protest the violent eviction of occupiers from Zuccotti Park. Despite the vitriolic press, ridicule and ambivalence that many had felt about the tent camp, the response was powerful. As dusk came, so did New Yorkers, in the thousands. Filing down the streets and emerging from the subways, flag bearing crowds made their way to Foley Square to hear the stories of anguish and resistance told by ordinary people that had been screwed by the American Dream. At its peak, well over 20,000 strong had gathered to show their support and solidarity. And they were not just the young. It was parents and grandparents and teachers and construction workers. They were Black and Latino and Asian and living testament to the human tapestry that is America. And in that gathering dusk, as the throng began to push against the police barriers and make its way down Broadway, it felt like something had shifted, that the opening overture of the Occupy movement had been sounded and that the substance of the music was still to come.

2012 is the International Year of Co-operatives. With over one billion co-op members in 127 countries, there is much for the co-op movement to celebrate and so many successes to point to. In Canada alone, over 9,000 co-ops

have more than 10 million members. Globally, co-ops and credit unions provide livelihoods to more people than all the multinationals combined. From the Vancity and MECs of the world to the fair trade co-ops of Africa and the worker co-ops of Latin America, the co-op movement has continued to build a vision of economic democracy and social equity that was once dismissed as utopian. It has flourished and it has lessons worth learning. The co-op movement can tap into and help to articulate and give direction to the deep discontent and longing for a better future that now animates the Occupiers and their supporters around the globe. There has rarely been a better time..

For further information on the co-op movement and the UN International Year of Co-operatives in 2012, visit [www.ica.coop](http://www.ica.coop), [www.coopscanada.coop](http://www.coopscanada.coop), [www.bcca.coop](http://www.bcca.coop)



**John Restakis** is executive director of the BC Co-operative Association and author of **Humanizing the Economy – Co-operatives in the Age of Capital.**



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# Datebook

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**Dr. Roger Rogers**  
1928 – 2011

On November 22, Dr. Roger Rogers, a pioneer of integrative health in Canada, passed away at the age of 83. Born in Vancouver, Dr. Rogers co-founded the Centre for Integrated Healing in Vancouver in 1997 with Dr. Hal Gunn. The Centre has since been renamed InspireHealth. Dr. Rogers was also involved in founding and supporting the Association of Complementary & Integrative Physicians of BC (ACIPBC), and the Canadian Complementary Medical Association (CCMA). In 2001, Dr. Rogers was appointed to the Order of British Columbia, the province's highest honour, for his pioneering work in alternative and complementary cancer care. The Dr. Rogers Prize for Excellence in Complementary and Alternative Medicine has now been established in recognition of his contribution to the field and his tireless efforts to gain widespread recognition for and acceptance of complementary and alternative cancer treatments in this country. In 2002, Dr. Rogers was inducted into the Canadian Health Food Association's Hall of Fame. He will be greatly missed. A donation in Roger's name may be made to InspireHealth. (Flowers are gratefully declined.) To donate, please call 604-734-7125 or visit [www.inspirehealth.ca](http://www.inspirehealth.ca)

## DEC 2 (Begins)

**Surviving Progress** begins limited run Dec. 2 @ Rio Theatre (Vancouver) & Cumberland (Toronto). From executive producer Martin Scorsese and producers of The Corporation [survivingprogress.com](http://survivingprogress.com)

## DEC 9-11

**Introduction to Foot Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818 [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

## DEC 11

**"An Aquarian Christmas Party"** – Do You See What I See? A new age, a new star, miracles aplenty. An informal, informative celebration. Refreshments served. FREE. 2-4PM, Roundhouse Community Centre (Pacific@Davie) 604-983-0926.

## DEC 16

**Christmas in the Round & Winter Solstice Celebration:** hosted by MantraVani Orchestra. 8PM, St. Mark's Church, 1805 Larch St., Vancouver. Tickets \$30/door, \$25/Banyen Books. [www.healingvoices.net/events](http://www.healingvoices.net/events)

## DEC 17-18

**MAWO'S 9th Annual Vancouver International Film Festival 4 Peace**, Britannia Community Centre, 1661 Napier St., FREE. [filmfest4peace.blogspot.com](http://filmfest4peace.blogspot.com), [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org)

## DEC 18

**"Ya Helwa" An Evening of Bellydance:** Rahel presents a bellydance showcase event. Ukrainian Hall, 805 E. Pender, 7PM, Tickets \$15. [www.raheldance.com](http://www.raheldance.com)

## DEC 24-27

**Christmas Celebration Retreat:** A silent retreat. Imbibe the stillness of this special time. See Upcoming Events at [www.selfrealizationcentrecanada.com](http://www.selfrealizationcentrecanada.com) 1-604-740-0898.

## DEC 31

**53 Years of the Cuban Revolution** New Years Eve Party, 8PM, Polish Veterans Assoc., 1134 Kingsway, Tickets/Info call 778-882-5223. Tickets \$15/advance, \$20/door. [www.vancubasolidarity.com](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com)

## JAN 12

**Countdown to 2012 UN International Year of Co-operatives.** Launched by the British Columbia Co-operative Association, Van Dusen Botanical Gardens, 5251 Oak St., Vancouver. 9am-1pm.

## JAN 12-14

**"Sacred Economics & Ascent of Humanity"** w/ author Charles Eisenstein. A mind-opening glimpse of new solutions for the future of money & our contribution. Jan 12: talk, 7:30PM, Port Moody. Jan 13: talk, 8:30PM, Eternal Abundance, Vancouver. Jan. 14: workshop, 10AM-8:30PM, The Transition Leadership Intensive w/panel talk at 6PM, Liu Institute at UBC. Registration: <http://consciouslivingradio.org/page141.htm>

## JAN 13-15

**Introduction to Foot Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818 [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

## JAN 26-29

**Guelph Organic Conference 2012:** Seeds of Cooperation. Guelph University Centre, Expo & Tasting Fair Jan. 28-29. [www.guelphorganicconference.ca](http://www.guelphorganicconference.ca), 514-824-4120, Ext. 56205.

## JAN 27-29

**Advanced Reflexology:** Professional Skills Course. Designed for success in your professional reflexology practice. Pre-requisite: basic reflexology course. Course Fee \$395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

## FEB 3-4

**Judith Lasater**, internationally renowned yoga teacher/therapist. Vancouver workshop: SI Joint and Lumbar Spine in Asana. Early registration advised. [www.soulspringwellness.ca](http://www.soulspringwellness.ca)

## FEB 26-MAR 03

**Natural Spiritual Healing Course:** Transform yourselves and the lives of others. Learn to be a Healer. See Upcoming Events at [www.selfrealizationcentrecanada.com](http://www.selfrealizationcentrecanada.com) 1-604-740-0898.

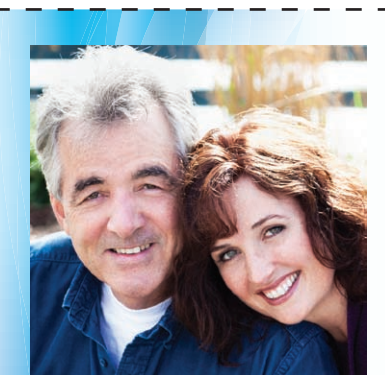
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**SOS (Science of Spirituality):** See Resource Directory listing in Spiritual Practices for schedule in Richmond, Vancouver & Victoria. 604-277-1247. All Welcome. [www.sos.org](http://www.sos.org)

## TUESDAYS

**Reflexology Student Clinic** 6-10pm. One-hour sessions \$20. By appointment only. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)



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# Consumer voices frustration with Health Canada's enzyme and probiotics regulations

**Dear Scott Sawler and the Natural Health Product Directorate:**

I have spent four frustrating years writing letters and speaking to my provincial and federal public health servants. I am given blank stares and the same verbal script about how the government wants to keep Canadians safe. My grievances challenging the elimination of very safe products are not being considered whatsoever in these conversations. This political system does not seem to belong to me or the people who feel as I do about Health Canada's crushing Natural Health Product Regulations.

I am writing this email to you in order to explain my position, which is contrary to Health Canada's Natural Health Product Directorate's (NHPD's) decision that will affect my use of enzymes and probiotics. It will cost me and other Canadians our well-being. Maybe this is the intention of pharmaceutical stakeholders such as Consumer Health Products Canada, the Canadian International Pharmaceutical Association, Health Canada and others who persist in regulating NHPs within a pharmaceutical drug-style model.

For instance, the NHPD's proposition against the free use of enzymes and the standardization of digestive aids such as unique probiotic formulations is undemocratic, authoritarian and discriminatory. In fact, it is based on zero supporting evidence. The panel of lower ranking Health Canada employees working on this file was extremely dismayed with the biased way in which this decision on enzymes and probiotics was being made.

The Canadian Digestive Disorder Association states that more than 20 million Canadians suffer from digestive disorders every year. However, because few people speak openly about their digestive symptoms, government, employers and the general public underestimate the magnitude of the problem. Statistics include the following:

- Digestive disorders cost \$18 billion annually in health care costs and lost productivity (as of 2000).
- Each year, nearly 30,000 Canadian's die of diseases of the digestive system.

Must I now be forced to litigate against all those responsible for these decisions that discriminate against me, someone who was diagnosed with irritable bowel disease and a hiatal hernia 20- years-ago? My argument represents the feelings of others who suffer from chronic and terminal ailments. Our best insurance against mal-absorption is the use of enzymes and probiotics.

There are full spectrum forces restricting the consumer from the convenient therapeutic use of Natural Health Products (NHPs). As an example, Consumer Health Products Canada (CHPA) was formerly known as the Non-Prescription Drug Manufacturers Association of Canada, the Proprietary Association of Canada and the Proprietary Articles Trade Association. Like a chameleon, this trade association seems to have changed its name over the years to suit an evolving agenda. It is a powerful lobby

group that speaks to Health Canada on behalf of major pharmaceutical industry members. It does not consist of NHP members. Its guiding motto is focused on "Advancing Evidence Based Self-Care," but the scientific, drug-style regulations it lobbies to enact on NHPs endanger the availability of life-essential NHPs that have never, prior to these Regulations, faced recalls due to potential danger.

Over the last few years, headlines in the mainstream media demanded that pharmaceutical companies be held accountable for over 107,000 annual deaths caused by prescription use while under medical supervision. Will



**Over the last few years, media headlines have demanded that pharmaceutical companies be held accountable for over 107,000 annual deaths caused by prescription use while under medical supervision.**

the CHPC dare lobby the federal government for the "Advancement of Safety Monitoring and Reporting of Pharmaceutical Drug Dangers and Clinical Trials"? This fall, the Auditor General of Canada's publication includes a damning report on Health Canada's regulation of pharmaceutical drugs

In my opinion, there are internal forces restricting access and diversity of Natural Health Products (NHPs), including those working within the NHP industry. I have heard business stakeholders explain that naturopaths may be granted "prescription-only" rights for select NHPs. This would mean consumers would have to book appointments with practitioners in order to access many useful NHPs. There are factions of NHP organizations that are divided and compromising in their negotiations for fear of appearing uncooperative.

Large manufacturers can afford to commit human and financial resources to following the NHP Regulations. Some desire to reduce the number of their competitors within the NHP marketplace, as the NHP Regulations squeeze small and mid-sized manufacturers out of business. As a consumer, I ask, "Where is the desperate outrage from practitioners and retailers?" Why are they afraid to publicly discuss the dire future of NHPs in Canada? Consumers are simply not being informed about what is taking place and how to defend their natural health interests.

Each of us stands to lose in the coming years, as NHP

retailers in the country will carry little to differentiate one store's product from the next. I noticed this whilst in Europe. There, you find very small sanitized, homeopathic pharmaceutical shops, with very few over-the-counter products. All vitamin and mineral supplements were locked up behind glass shelving. They were double in price compared to Canadian prices. Customer orders were given to the on-duty desk practitioners. Most products on the shelves were not pure or concentrates, but watered down and mixed with artificial preservatives and flavourings, chemicals and "parfum."

The NHP industry cannot survive if products are compromised and when the synthesis of products for individualized treatments is no longer possible due to limited access. According to the proposed NHP Regulation on enzymes, I will be asked to pay for a naturopathic consultation each time I require three days worth of enzymes. If this is the case, I would like to be compensated for my natural healthcare costs for NHPs that are being forced to pass drug-oriented safety and efficacy requirements by Health Canada. It is only fair.

Additionally, this three-day, prescription-only restriction on enzymes is not founded in science. I have studied the work of Dr. Howell, a renowned expert on enzyme nutrition, who compiled his research into a 1,000-page book called *Enzyme Nutrition*. My family and close friends have safely used up to 30 enzymes a day for various ailments. Never have I experienced a health issue from continued use. Rather, I have personal testimonies of healing.

Who will stand for the free access of enzymes and probiotics for the sake of all of the hundreds of thousands of Canadians who are crippled by digestive disorders? If this regulatory change is approved, emergency rooms and walk-in clinics will be impacted. If we cannot simply purchase enzymes and probiotics and use them at our own convenience, we will suffer.

The NHP Regulations lack common sense. They discredit the honour of the NHP field. Countries are considering bans on Red Bull soft drinks, while Health Canada grants this product a Natural Product Number (NPN) license! It contains dangerous acesulfame K and aspartame. Dangerous products that are not entirely natural are receiving NPNs. Roloids and Crest toothpaste now have NPNs.

I have met my threshold with the 2001 NHP Regulations. My life will be in danger if enzymes, probiotics and other digestive aids are standardized or restricted. This is a life threatening situation for 20 million Canadians.

Most sincerely,  
F. Longo, Manitoba

*Editor's note: To learn more about health freedom visit [www.naturalhealthfreedomcanada.com](http://www.naturalhealthfreedomcanada.com).*

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